

ADVISORY COUNCIL ON WILDLIFE & FRESHWATER FISH MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, August 27, 2019
Richardson & Robbins Building Auditorium
89 Kings Highway, Dover, Delaware
Phone 302-739-9912, FAX 302-739-6157

ADVISORY COUNCIL

1. Edward A. Montague, Chair
2. Garrett Grier, Jr., Vice Chair (Absent)
3. Raymond F. Burris
4. Neal Dukes (Absent)
5. Nathan Hudson
6. Joe C. Johnson
7. Steven Kendus
8. Dale R. Scuse (Absent)
9. F. Thomas Unruh (Absent)

DIVISION OF FISH & WILDLIFE

1. Director David E. Saveikis
2. Joe Rogerson
3. Johnny Moore
4. Anthony Gonzon
5. Chief Drew Aydelotte
6. Dana Patone

PUBLIC

11 Visitors

Due to a scheduling conflict with the auditorium, the meeting was moved to a different conference room in the Richardson & Robbins Building and therefore started late. Steps have been taken to prevent future scheduling conflicts.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Montague at 7:33 pm.

Agenda Item 1. Approval of Minutes (Chairman).

A motion was made by Councilman Burris, seconded by Councilman Kendus and the Council voted unanimously to approve the June 25, 2019 meeting minutes as written.

Agenda Item 2. Nanticoke River American Shad Restoration Update (Johnny Moore).

Johnny Moore, fisheries scientist, gave a presentation on the Nanticoke River American Shad restoration project and associated shad hatchery located on the river. Since 2000, over 9 million juvenile American Shad have been stocked in the Nanticoke River, most of which were produced at the Division's shad hatchery from eggs obtained from adult fish collected from and released back into the river. Juvenile shad produced at the hatchery are marked before stocking, with a substantial percentage of shad later sampled in the river identified as being stocked from the hatchery. Increased predation by the invasive Blue Catfish is a potential issue for survival of shad fry released into and naturally produced in the river. The Division will continue monitoring the American Shad population and hatchery success in the Nanticoke River, as well as Blue Catfish impacts on the shad population.

Agenda Item 3. Delaware Bayshore Initiative Projects (Anthony Gonzon).

Anthony Gonzon, Bayshore conservation planner, provided an update on several outdoor recreation projects, including wildlife-viewing facilities and trails at the Augustine Wildlife Area, Blackbird Creek Reserve, Aquatic Resources Education Center, Little Creek Wildlife Area, Bowers Beach and Slaughter Beach. The update provided a summary of completed wildlife-viewing amenities at each location and the progress of projects still under construction. The projects are totally funded with state bond and federal highway grant funding.

Agenda Item 4. Proposed Wildlife Viewing Enhancements at Ted Harvey Conservation Area (Anthony Gonzon).

Anthony Gonzon, Bayshore conservation planner, gave a presentation highlighting the two current wildlife-viewing platform projects planned for the Ted Harvey Conservation Area. Information presented included details on designs, materials and anticipated construction schedule. The projects are funded by federal highway grant and state bond funding. Mr. Gonzon requested comments and feedback from the Council and the audience.

Agenda Item 5. Director's Update (David E. Saveikis).

Director Saveikis updated the Council on the following relevant legislation passed by the most recent General Assembly and signed by Governor Carney: H.B. 156 provides hunting, trapping and fishing license exemptions to non-residents honorably discharged from the armed forces of the United States with at least a 60%

service connected disability (similar to the current exemption for residents) and S.B. 84 that expands the Delaware Native Species Commission from 15 to 19 members.

Director Saveikis informed the Council that the new Division deer "extension agent" biologist has been selected and will be starting soon to provide deer management technical assistance to farmers.

Director Saveikis informed the Council that the Division worked collaboratively with and issued a deer crop damage permit to the Department of Agriculture to manage the high deer population causing excessive crop damage to fields on portions of Redden State Forest. This permit allows the public to harvest antlerless deer on two tracts at Redden State Forest from August 15, 2019 through September 30, 2019 using a variety of methods, including those firearms that are legal to harvest deer in Delaware. The permit required appropriate signage to inform the various public users that firearms were in use to harvest deer and that all users of the area must wear hunter orange during this time period. All deer harvested under this permit must be tagged and registered by the individual harvesting the deer using their license tags.

Director Saveikis answered questions regarding the progress and explained the extensive process to change numerous hunting regulations to provide additional hunting opportunities. It was explained that this is a lengthy process taking at least six months once the proposed regulation changes are drafted and that a formal public hearing must be held no sooner than 20 days after the proposed regulations are published in the State Register of Regulations. The public will have an opportunity to provide comments in writing or at the public hearing. Director Saveikis indicated that the proposed regulation changes are almost complete and a reasonable expectation is for the public hearing to be held in late January 2020, with a goal of having the final regulations in effect for the 2020/2021 hunting season that starts September 2020. The Council will be notified of the hearing date. Chairman Montague encouraged all council members to attend the public hearing.

AGENDA FOR THE 9/24/2019 ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING

Council asked the Division of Fish & Wildlife to provide the agenda for the next meeting, with the Division subsequently developing the following agenda:

1. Approval of Minutes from June 25, 2019 Council Meeting (Chairman).
2. Atlantic Flyway Council 2020-2021 Migratory Game Bird Recommendations (Rob Hossler).
3. Tundra Swan Permit Lottery (Justyn Foth).

There being no further business, a motion was made by Councilman Kendus, seconded by Councilman Hudson and unanimously approved by the Council to adjourn the meeting at 8:52 pm.

Sincerely,



Dana Patone
Recording Secretary